



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

Family Health Program Officially Launched

Tuesday, November 25, 2008 (Addis Ababa) – Today the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with Pathfinder International and John Snow, Inc. (JSI), launched the Integrated Family Health Program. The new US \$50 million dollar health program, which focuses on family planning and reproductive health, maternal, newborn and child health, will im-

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USAID Mission Director Glenn Anders (R) and State Minister of Health His Excellency Dr. Kebede chatting at the launch ceremony of the Integrated Family Health Program.

Ethiopian Burial Societies Join Fight Against HIV/AIDS

By Phillip Kurata
Staff Writer

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia — Burial societies, which have helped people through the expense and grief surrounding death for centuries here, are expanding their missions to keep people alive as the HIV/AIDS epidemic exacts its toll.



In May 2003, idir representatives met to share their experiences on how the best possible home-based care can be provided.

Some 200,000 burial societies, known as idirs, are found throughout Ethiopia, and almost every Ethiopian is connected to one, either personally or through family.

The Tesfa community association in western Addis

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Family Health Program Officially Launched . . .

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prove the lives of more than 43 million Ethiopians in the next five years.

The program will result in reduced population growth, improved maternal, newborn and child health; and reduced maternal, neonatal, and child mortality.

The Integrated Family Health Program plans to support Health Extension Workers and volunteers in 360 woredas of the Amhara, Tigray, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationality and People's Regions, as well as in pocket areas of Benishangul-Gumuz Region.

His Excellency, the Federal Minister of Health Dr. Tedros Adhanom, and USAID/Ethiopia Mission Director Mr. Glenn E. Anders, delivered remarks at the event, which was held at the new office of Pathfinder International and JSI. Program managers also presented speeches, emphasizing the need for collaboration among all stakeholders supporting the Health Sector Development Program III and the Health Extension Program.

The main objectives of the new program are to improve health practices at the household and community level; improve availability and quality of health services, products and information; strengthen key elements of the health system; and encourage systematic program learning to inform policy and program investment. The program will be crucial in realizing the National

Accelerated Expansion of Primary Health Care goals and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in health that the Government of Ethiopia is committed to.

The Integrated Family Health Program is funded by the American

nity health programs with a strong emphasis on building capacity and skills of local public and civil society institutions. The two organizations and their partners will build effective networks with wide-ranging health programs – supported by other donors and institutions – to ensure that national health goals are



State Minister of Health His Excellency Dr. Kebede speaking at the event.

people through USAID and will be run jointly by Pathfinder International and JSI, in partnership with the Consortium of Reproductive Health Associations (CORHA) and Academy for Educational Development (AED). Program support at the grassroots level will be undertaken by local NGOs operating in the areas.

Pathfinder International and JSI both have extensive field level operations experience in Ethiopia and in implementing successful commu-

attainable and sustainable. The networking and collaboration will focus on strengthening the public health system and service delivery at the primary health care level.

For further information, contact the Integrated Family Health Program at 011-681-8378 or tgi-day@pathfind.org. ♦

Ethiopian Burial Societies Join Fight Against HIV/AIDS . . .

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Ababa, an idir that has adopted a new name and broader mission, helps 4,300 orphans and vulnerable children as well as the elderly people who have become their caregivers.

"Many grandparents take care of their grandchildren because [the children's] parents have died from AIDS," said Tesfa chairman Berehnu Abera. "The demand for our services is rising because of the epidemic. The problem of orphans and vulnerable children is getting huge."

Typically, idir members make small monthly payments to a communal fund. When a death occurs, the group arranges and pays for funerals and the traditional three- to seven-day mourning period.

Getting idirs involved in the war against the HIV/AIDS epidemic did not occur easily or instantaneously. "Many community elders opposed participation because of the stigma attached to the disease," said Tesfa program officer Yonas Zewdu. "Now, in our district, there are very few HIV-positive people who are bedridden. Because the stigma has been lifted here, they have revealed their status and gotten medication and support." He said, however, that the stigma remains strong in some rural areas.

Experts estimate that the epidemic has created millions of orphans and vulnerable children in Ethiopia. In

urban areas, AIDS patients occupy about 60 percent of hospital beds. The U.S. Agency for International Development has partnered with organizations, such as Save the Children and local idirs, to involve them in home-based care for the patients. Through the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the United States provides \$20 million from 2004 to 2009 to finance anti-AIDS programs in Ethiopia.

Idirs identify the orphans and elders in their communities most in need of assistance and organize educational programs to train families in how to care for the sick. They reduce the cost of home-based care by contributing their own human and financial resources, such as providing transportation to health care centers.

Tesfa organizes "community conversations" once every two weeks, where residents identify problems related to HIV and look for collective solutions. "This is a unique and highly effective approach that we are using in Ethiopia," Zewdu said. "Elderly people who provide care to orphans are able to voice their concerns and receive community support in the form of counseling, food donations and financial assistance."

Zewdu said that when trouble occurs in households with adopted children, Tesfa provides counseling to both caregivers and children.

"We try to keep children in homes and stop them from taking up life

on the streets. We teach the children to respect elders and elders to be more self-reliant," Zewdu said. He said that Tesfa also provides legal support for orphans who are exploited by adults.

Tesfa helps the community improve its finances by providing microloans and business training. For example, a small loan might go to help a woman buy hens, which lay eggs. The woman sells the eggs, makes money and repays her loan. Tesfa provided education and funding for an orphan who got training as a beautician and went on to open a beauty parlor in the neighborhood. Another received funding to build an oven in which to bake bread that gets sold to hotels.

"We found that giving money to very poor people who had no notion of saving and repaying loans was not useful," Zewdu said. Extending loans to groups has been successful because neighbors pressure each other to repay the debts. Once a loan has been paid off, then people can qualify for new loans.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Bush Calls Qadhafi to Praise Settlement Agreement

By Merle D. Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — A telephone call between President Bush and a world leader is a common enough event to not merit much attention, but when the president called Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi November 17, it represented a remarkable turnaround in U.S.-Libyan relations.

White House spokesman Gordon

Johndroe confirmed November 17 the two had spoken. Bush wanted to express his satisfaction with a \$1.5 billion payment that Libya made to settle a long-running dispute over compensation for victims of Libyan terrorism in the 1980s.

Bush and Qadhafi

"discussed that this agreement should help to bring a painful chapter in the

history between our two countries closer to closure," Johndroe said in a prepared statement, according to news reports.

The money comes from a \$1.5 billion fund for U.S. victims of Libyan-linked terrorism in the 1980s that Libya completed paying in October. The money will go to the families of American victims of the 1988 Pan Am Flight 103 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, and the victims and families of victims of the 1986 bomb attack on a Berlin disco. Funds left after they are compen-

sated will be used to settle claims for other deaths, injuries and damage caused by Libyan agents.

U.S. Ambassador David Welch negotiated a comprehensive agreement between the United States and Libya this year to settle all terrorism-related claims from the 1980s. Welch is the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs.

lishing a dialogue that encompasses all subjects, including human rights reform and the fight against terrorism."

Since the compensation agreement was reached, the United States has established a trade and commercial office in the Libyan capital of Tripoli. And in early September, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice became the most senior U.S. official to visit Libya in more than a half century.

The comprehensive agreement also accounted for 41 people Libya said were killed when U.S. air strikes hit Benghazi and Tripoli in 1986 in retaliation for the attack in Berlin.

At the November 18 State Department daily briefing, spokesman Sean McCormack said the relationship with Libya has come a considerable distance.

"But it has a long, long way to go, specifically in terms of freedoms, universally recognized

freedoms, in Libya. We're going to continue to work on those issues."

"Libya has done much of what we have asked it to do to change the relationship," McCormack said. "And Libya has demonstrated through its actions that it is willing to take tough steps in order to change the relationship." ♦



David Welch, the top U.S. diplomat for the Middle East, embraces Libyan envoy Ahmed al-Fatouri, right, after signing a cooperation agreement in Tripoli, Libya, that settles all outstanding lawsuits by American victims of terrorism, clearing the way for the full restoration of diplomatic relations.

"While we will always mourn the loss of life as a result of past terrorist activities, the settlement agreement is an important step in repairing the relationship between Libya and the United States," Johndroe's statement said. "Libya has taken important steps on the road to normalizing its relations with the international community, beginning with its renunciation in 2003 of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction."

"The United States will continue to work on the bilateral relationship with Libya, with the aim of estab-

Desmond Tutu Awarded 2008 U.S. Fulbright Prize

By Merle D. Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — If peace and understanding could be human, then South African Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu would be one of the best examples of these concepts because few have worked harder for them, often in the face of insurmountable odds.

Tutu was awarded the 2008 J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding at the State Department November 21. Tutu accepted the honor on behalf of “many who have often been faceless, anonymous.”

The Fulbright Prize recognizes Tutu’s “tireless work for peace in South Africa and elsewhere, his courage in speaking out against injustice, his efforts to achieve a democratic and just society without racial division, and his initiatives to alleviate suffering caused by HIV/AIDS,” the Fulbright Association said in a prepared statement.

Fulbright President Suzanne Siskel said it is “a great honor to confer the 2008 Fulbright Prize on Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, whose life work exemplifies the conviction that we must, as the Fulbright Program’s founder insisted, recognize human dignity as the essential common bond for a peaceful world.”

The prize carries a \$50,000 cash award provided by the Coca-Cola Foundation. The award was presented to Tutu by Coca-Cola Chairman Neville Isdell.

“From war-torn countries to pov-

erty-stricken communities, Desmond Tutu walks into darkness and always finds the light,” Isdell said. “He sees the best in people as he confronts the worst in people. You can’t look at his life’s work — at his



South African Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu receives the Fulbright Prize for International Understanding November 21.

erty-stricken communities, Desmond Tutu walks into darkness and always finds the light,” Isdell said. “He sees the best in people as he confronts the worst in people. You can’t look at his life’s work — at his

The J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding was created by the Fulbright Association in 1993 to recognize individuals who have made extraordinary contributions toward bringing peoples, cultures and nations to greater understanding of others. Past recipients include former President Bill Clinton, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, former Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel, former President Jimmy Carter, and former

South African President Nelson Mandela.

Fulbright served as a U.S. senator from Arkansas from 1945 to 1975 and was the longest serving chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He helped create an international exchange program, Fulbright Fellowships, that helps enhance international understanding. The program is administered by the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, Mandela in 1993, and Carter in 2002. On November 20, Tutu joined with 30 other Nobel Peace Prize recipients and the nonprofit group Save the Children in calling for help for millions of children trapped in war zones across the globe. The letter was released on the 19th anniversary of the adoption of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

“If more than 70 million children do not even have the chance to go to school, and more than half of these children live in countries affected by armed conflict — what are these children learning?” the letter asks.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

U.S. Envoy to Zimbabwe Decries Grim Humanitarian Situation

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Zimbabwe is facing a man-made food and health emergency that is being exacerbated by the actions of its government and the government's failure to implement a power-sharing agreement with its political opposition, the U.S. ambassador to Zimbabwe says.

"We're seeing the humanitarian situation here in Zimbabwe really go down the tubes," Ambassador James McGee told reporters at the State Department in a November 20 videoconference.

According to estimates from the United Nations community, he said, "1.5 million Zimbabweans are at risk of food insecurity right now, and by the end of this crop season, that number could jump up to over 5 million people."

Sanitation is also a serious challenge, especially in areas near the South African border, where many Zimbabweans are trying to flee the country.

"There are now 294 confirmed deaths from cholera here in Zimbabwe," McGee said, along with more than 1,200 confirmed cases and another 2,500 unconfirmed cases of the disease.

Compounding matters, Zimbabwe's health system "has totally col-

lapsed," and medical professionals are not being paid. "The three major hospitals here in Harare have closed," he said. Clinics in the countryside reportedly are unable to operate and are turning patients away. "In some places, police have been stationed outside of clinics to ensure that no one can enter the premises," McGee said.



Some Zimbabweans are scavenging for food, including termites, in an effort to feed themselves.

The ambassador said the overall health and food situation is "frankly, intolerable," and is concurrent with the political impasse between President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the opposition led by the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party.

"I don't see anything that's going to alleviate these problems until the government of Robert Mugabe starts to act in good faith and deal with Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC faction in a true manner," McGee said.

Mugabe's grip over the country has become stronger during the past year, thanks to continued political payoffs to subordinates and the self-interested loyalty of security force leaders whose "hands are absolutely as bloody as his," McGee said.

RESTRICTIONS ON HUMANITARIAN AID EASED ONLY RECENTLY

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) seeking to combat the health and food emergency have faced government barriers inhibiting their ability to extend aid efforts to

the countryside.

"The government put a ban on the ability of NGOs to distribute food back in June, but we've worked with the government and that ban was finally lifted about two weeks ago," McGee said. "What this means is that we're very, very far behind in our annual food distribution cycle. So we are working desperately now as hard as we can to try to catch up."

In addition, the ZANU-PF government also has finally allowed NGOs to fund their operations through foreign currency rather than with Zimbabwe's collapsing notes. McGee said annual inflation is currently at more than 210 million percent. The use of foreign funding also should help international aid agencies get food out to the countryside, according to the ambassador.

"We'll be able to rent the trucks that we need to deliver the food. We'll be able to pay the salaries of the additional people that we need to deliver the food," he said.

The total U.S. food and health assistance package for Zimbabwe has risen to \$218 million for 2008, the ambassador said, and additional U.S. humanitarian funding is coming to Zimbabwe through international aid institutions such as the Global Fund.

To help address the cholera epidemic, the Bush administration is working with NGOs and local communities in Zimbabwe to provide clean water, water tablets and saline tablets.

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U.S. Envoy to Zimbabwe Decries Grim Humanitarian Situation . . .

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Zimbabwe's education system also has "totally fallen apart" at the primary, secondary and university levels. McGee said Zimbabwe once had a higher literacy rate than the United States and spent 25 percent of its budget on education in the 1980s and early 1990s. "Today that figure is 18 cents per student per year."

Many schools have closed, university students are not in class, and there is "no hope that they're going to get back ... anytime soon," McGee said. He also related that his driver had been asked to pay an additional \$700 fee to cover the costs of his children's public school. "That's just well beyond the ability of normal Zimbabweans to pay," he added.

With a government that is committed to taking care of its people and improving agricultural methods, Zimbabwe can quickly improve its humanitarian situation and return to its former status as the "breadbasket of Southern and Central Africa," he said. It will take longer to rid the country of endemic corruption and return to a market-driven economy.

"But again, if there is good will on the part of government, we in the international community are willing to step forward and help them as

much as possible to achieve the results that they need," McGee said.

The United States will continue to put pressure on the Mugabe regime through targeted sanctions that he said are having an effect against

SADC's negotiations that led to the September 15 power-sharing agreement between ZANU-PF and the MDC were "a watershed moment" for the group, but SADC needs to continue its pressure against the government to "ensure that the will of the people of Zimbabwe is met"

and "that the agreement or unity government is established," he said.

He added that SADC "should not recognize Robert Mugabe as the legitimate president of Zimbabwe unless this agreement is implemented."

However, the Zimbabwean people also need to encourage change to help relieve their suffering, he said.

"As we can help them with the humanitarian assistance, and as much as we try to assist them with our political stance against this country, if there's going to be meaningful change in Zimbabwe, it's going to occur because of peaceful, democratic change here within the country," McGee said.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦



Cholera, spreading due to poor sanitation even as hospitals and clinics are forced to close, has killed 294 in 2008.

ZANU-PF officials, whose foreign assets have been seized and who have been forced to take their children out of foreign schools.

McGee added that "unless something does happen in the very, very near future, we have no choice but to become more difficult, tougher, on our sanctions."

The Bush administration also will continue to work with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union and the United Nations to encourage them to "spin up" their actions against the Mugabe regime.

White House Ceremony Honors Cultural Award Recipients

By Michael Bandler
Staff Writer

Washington — A Lincoln scholar, an actress from the so-called Golden Age of Hollywood (1930s-1950s), a pioneering comic-book illustrator and a songwriting team are among the latest recipients of America's most prestigious cultural honors, the National Medals of Arts and National Humanities Medals.

In the most recent annual White House tribute to cultural creativity and scholarship, President Bush and first lady Laura Bush saluted an expansive array of artistic imagination and beauty. The November 17 ceremony recognized visionary efforts ranging from the Superman comics that have mesmerized young and old for nearly three-quarters of a century to the sights and sounds of radiant dance and music.

The honorees — including journalists, an author of children's books and a radio talk-show host — “serve as custodians of our history, patrons of our culture, and authors of America's artistic legacy,” the first lady said.

To some degree, the aura of Abraham Lincoln and his era could be seen in the roster of medal recipients. The awards ceremony preceded, by just three months, the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of America's 16th president.

Harold Holzer, a leading Lincoln historian as well as senior vice president of New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art, was awarded a National Humanities Medal, as was

Gabor Boritt, professor of Civil War studies and director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania. In addition, an arts medal was bestowed on the Ford's Theatre Society, the nonprofit, Washington-based organization responsible for stage presentations at

Richard and Robert Sherman — their works (including the scores of such films as *Mary Poppins* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, and the 1964 World's Fair theme song, “It's a Small World”) are familiar to many, even if the songwriters' names are not.



Laura Bush presents Coming Up Taller Awards during a White House ceremony January 22. (White House)

the theater in which Lincoln was shot in April 1865. The working theater will reopen in February 2009 following 18 months of extensive renovations.

Arguably, the two most sentimental favorites among the arts awardees were Olivia de Havilland, 92, the screen legend and winner of two Academy Awards who starred in such classic films as *Gone With the Wind* and *The Heiress*, and Stan Lee, 85, whose dozens of comic-book creations have included *Spider-Man*, the *Fantastic Four* and the *X-Men*.

As for the songwriters — brothers

This year, there were a number of groups — as well as individuals — among the recipients. They include the Norman Rockwell Museum (in Stockbridge, Massachusetts), which displays the artwork of the beloved, socially conscious magazine illustrator for whom the facility is named, and the José Limón Dance Foundation of New York City, dedicated to the works and vision of the late Mexican-born modern dancer and choreographer.

Arts medal recipients included choristers from one of the United States' pre-eminent black institu-

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U.S. Court Orders Release of Five Guantánamo Bay Detainees

By Merle D. Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — A federal judge has determined that the United States lacks adequate legal evidence to hold five Algerians as detainees in the detention facility at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

U.S. District Judge Richard Leon ruled November 20 that the government failed to prove that five of six Algerians being held were “enemy combatants.” The judge ruled that the five should be released immediately. The Bosnian government has agreed to accept the five men, who immigrated to Bosnia from Algeria before they were detained in 2001.

Because the government failed to prove its case against the five men, Leon said, “the court must, and will, grant their petitions and order their release.” The men have been held by U.S. authorities for seven years.

“Seven years of waiting for our legal system to give them an answer to a question so important is, in my judgment, more than plenty,” Leon said. He read the decision at the U.S. District Court in Washington, which has been the site of many historic legal decisions in the United States.

The five men released by Leon's order are Lakhdar Boumediene, Mohamed Nechla, Hadj Boudella, Mustafa Ait Idir and Saber Lahmar.

The sixth Algerian, Belkacem Bensayah, will continue to be detained, Leon ruled, because there was enough evidence that he was close to an al-Qaida operative and had

sought help from others to travel to Afghanistan to fight against U.S. and coalition forces.

The six Algerian men, who were detained in 2001 in Bosnia, were accused of planning to travel to Afghanistan and fight against U.S. military forces, which were engaged in combat operations against the Taliban regime and forces of the terrorist group al-Qaida. Leon said in his written opinion that the entire case against the men rested on information obtained by intelligence agents from a single unnamed source. While the information may have been adequate for intelligence purposes, it was insufficient for a legal detention.

Much of the evidence and testimony in the case was conducted in closed sessions because it was based on classified intelligence.

The case was based on a writ of habeas corpus, which is a legal order that a person being held in custody be brought before a court of law. The burden of proof on the U.S. government in this instance was to justify further detention. The concept of habeas corpus is fundamental to the rule of law in the United States in preventing illegal detentions.

“While the information in the classified intelligence report, relating to the credibility and reliability of the source, was undoubtedly sufficient for the intelligence purposes for which it was prepared, it is not sufficient for the purposes for which a habeas court must now evaluate it,” Leon ruled. “To allow enemy combatancy to rest on so thin a reed would be inconsistent with this court's obligation under the Su-

preme Court's decision.”

The U.S. Supreme Court had ruled in June that detainees at Guantánamo could appeal their detentions in U.S. federal courts. However, Leon said in his decision that this is a unique case and that it should not be construed as applicable to other detainees and their situations.

Federal court cases for more than 200 other Guantánamo detainees are still pending in U.S. district courts. Many of these cases will be heard in Washington and elsewhere in the United States.

The Defense Department said that of the 779 people who have been detained at Guantánamo, at least 525 have departed for other countries and approximately 250 remain, according to The New York Times. The Pentagon has declined to release a list of the detainees currently at Guantánamo.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Despite 2008 Democratic Gains, Two-Party System Very Much Alive

By Stuart Gorin
Special Correspondent

Fort Lauderdale, Florida — The Republican Party's defeat in the recent U.S. presidential and congressional elections is not necessarily a setback for the conservative movement, and important roles in American politics remain for the party and the movement.

That is the consensus of a group of conservative writers, thinkers and politicians who gathered on a week-long Caribbean cruise for a seminar to assess the outcome of the November 4 voting, and to look for future ways to retain influence. The problem, they said, was that the Republican Party had turned away from conservative ideas and principles, a course change that led to the party's defeat at the polls.

Former Tennessee Senator Fred Thompson, an early Republican presidential candidate, set the stage by saying the election results were not a rejection of conservatism, and great reason for optimism remains. Democratic President-elect Obama personified change that is "built into our system," Thompson said, adding that no political party in U.S. history has won a third consecutive term in office during a downturn in the economy.

The day after the 2008 elections can be considered "the first day of a comeback," Thompson said, citing victories in 1968 by President Nixon, in 1980 by President Reagan and in 1994 by Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives as examples of Republican returns to power.

Another early Republican presidential hopeful, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, said such a

comeback requires the party to tell America's middle class what it stands for, not just criticize Democratic programs. In order to get stronger, Romney said, the Republicans need people to believe in social, economic and foreign-policy conservatism. Party leaders must show integrity and moral and fiscal responsibility, he added.

Republicans and conservatives need to get their voices heard in an atmosphere in which they perceive there is a bias against them by some in the news media, Romney said. "So we have to take the message elsewhere."

That can be on the Internet, said Brent Bozell, president of the Media Research Center, which tracks reporting in major newspapers and radio and television stations in the United States. Liberals and Democrats already use the Internet effectively, he said, and now conservatives and Republicans must become more skillful at using the same tool to put forth their message.

The consensus view was that the Republican message includes lower taxes and government spending, a strong defense, the sanctity of life, constitutionalist judicial nominations and secret ballots for union organizing.

BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT

During a panel discussion on problems with the economy and the current government plan to help ailing businesses, Romney said there is a need for government regulation of business, but not excessive regulation. Former Pennsylvania Representative Pat Toomey, who is now president of the political advocacy group Club for Growth, said the way for government to encourage

economic growth is through lower taxes.

Darcy Olson, president of the Goldwater Institute, a policy advisory group, said most Americans still believe government should not interfere in business. Regarding issues that conservatives believe do not belong at the federal level, Olson said the future lies in state solutions. Subjects here include education, voting rights, right-to-life issues and protection of property, she said.

Concerning the role of the courts in the U.S. democratic process, panelists held the consensus view that judges should be strict constructionists and not use the bench to make laws that belong in the domain of the legislature.

Edward Whelan, president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, said when judicial candidates are vetted by the Senate, Republican senators should engage them on the merits and vote against them if they fail to advocate judicial restraint.

The legacy of the outgoing Bush administration, panelists agreed, is yet to be determined by history. They all gave the president high marks for keeping America safe since the September 11, 2001, attacks, for promoting tax cuts, and for appointing two conservatives justices to the U.S. Supreme Court.

But the panelists also said the president's relationship with conservatives was "complicated" because the Bush administration moved in the direction of bigger government. They cited increased spending, especially on the Medicare prescription drug benefit and the No Child Left Behind education program. ♦

Thanksgiving Day a Time for Reflection, Gratitude, Sharing

Washington — Thanksgiving Day in the United States is possibly the premier U.S. family celebration — typically celebrated at home or in a community setting and marked with a substantial feast. Thanksgiving provides an occasion for reunions of friends and families, and it affords Americans a shared opportunity to express gratitude for the freedoms they enjoy as well as food, shelter and other good things.

Many Americans also take time to prepare and serve meals to the needy at soup kitchens, churches and homeless shelters. Others donate to food drives or participate in charity fundraisers; in fact, hundreds of nonprofit groups throughout the country hold Thanksgiving Day charity races called “Turkey Trots.”

And on a more worldly note, Thanksgiving marks the beginning of the “holiday season” that continues through New Year’s Day. The Friday after Thanksgiving is one of the busiest shopping days of the year.

Every year, the president issues a proclamation naming the fourth Thursday in November (November 27 this year) a National Day of Thanksgiving. It is an official federal holiday, and virtually all government offices and schools — and most businesses — are closed.

THE FIRST THANKSGIVING

A variant of the harvest festivals celebrated in many parts of the world, Thanksgiving is popularly traced to a 1621 feast shared by the English Pilgrims who founded the Plymouth Colony (located in

present-day Massachusetts) and members of the Wampanoag Indian tribe. The Wampanoag were a people with a sophisticated society who had occupied the region for thousands of years, says the National Museum of the American Indian.

Because they harvested bountiful crops of corn, barley, beans and pumpkins the Pilgrims had much to be thankful for in the fall of 1621. The colonists and their Wampanoag benefactors — who brought deer to roast — held a harvest feast to express gratitude for God’s blessings. Although it is known that the colonists provided fowl for the feast, the rest of the menu remains an educated guess; the Pilgrims likely offered turkey, waterfowl and other wild game, seafood such as mussels, lobster and eels, vegetables, grapes and plums, and nuts.

The legacy of giving thanks, particularly with a shared feast, has survived the centuries. Several U.S. presidents — starting with George Washington in 1789 — issued Thanksgiving proclamations, but it wasn’t until President Abraham Lincoln’s 1863 proclamation that Thanksgiving became an annual national holiday. He called for it to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November. A 1941 congressional resolution moved it to the fourth Thursday to assure a longer post-Thanksgiving, pre-Christmas shopping season in years when there are



Youngsters with Camp Fire USA and other guests join President George W. Bush around May, the 2007 National Thanksgiving turkey, during Rose Garden festivities surrounding its official pardoning Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2007. White House photo by Joyce N. Boghosian

present-day Massachusetts) and members of the Wampanoag Indian tribe.

The Pilgrims had arrived in 1620, crossing the Atlantic Ocean to separate themselves from the official Church of England and practice freely their particular form of Puritanism. Arriving at Plymouth Colony too late to grow many crops, and lacking fresh food, the Pilgrims suffered terribly during the winter of 1620-1621. Half the colony died from disease. The following spring, local Wampanoag Indians taught the colonists how to grow corn (maize) and other local crops, and also helped the newcomers master

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Thanksgiving Day a Time for Reflection, Gratitude, Sharing . . .

(Continued from page 11)

five Thursdays in November.

Each year the president also “pardons” a Thanksgiving turkey — actually two turkeys, since one is a backup in case the other decides to misbehave during the ceremony. The two fowl, spared from the oven, live out the rest of their lives at a children’s petting zoo.

TRADITIONS OF THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving sees the most air and car travel of the year as families and friends try to reunite for the holiday. Many Americans enjoy a local Thanksgiving parade, or the annual Macy’s department store parade, televised live from New York City. Others watch televised American football. Overseas, U.S. troops are served a traditional

Thanksgiving dinner.

Turkey with stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie are staples of the Thanksgiving feast, although there are meat substitutes such as “tofurkey” (combining the words tofu and turkey), a loaf made from seitan (wheat protein) or tofu (soybean protein).

Thousands of charitable organizations serve hot Thanksgiving dinners to the needy — and to anyone who shows up — and millions of frozen turkeys are donated to families each year. “We pay tribute to all caring citizens who reach out a helping hand and serve a cause larger than themselves,” President Bush said in his 2008 Thanksgiving Day proclamation.

Among these caring citizens are the Morongo Band of Mission Indians in San Bernadino, California, who for 23 years have helped families in need at Thanksgiving. This year, the tribe announced that it provided 11,000 turkeys, the largest donation in the history of its Thanksgiving Outreach Program.

It is a reminder of the Native American role in the first American Thanksgiving, a feast held to thank the Indians for sharing their knowledge and skill. Without that help, the first Pilgrims likely would not have survived.

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White House Ceremony Honors Cultural Award Recipients . . .

(Continued from page 8)

tions of higher learning. The Fisk University Jubilee Singers, of Nashville, Tennessee, have kept the tradition of African-American spirituals alive for more than half a century.

Also honored were the Presser Foundation (of Haverford, Pennsylvania), which has played an important role in support and furtherance of music and music education, and the John Templeton Foundation, whose goal is to bring scientists and theologians together and to spur research on what it describes as the “big questions” of the day.

The 2008 National Medal of Arts recipients are:

Stan Lee, comic-book writer/illustrator

Olivia de Havilland, film actress
Robert B. and Richard M. Sherman, film and stage composers
Henry “Hank” Jones Jr., jazz pianist, bandleader and composer
Jesus Moroles, granite sculptor
Fisk University Jubilee Singers
Ford’s Theatre Society
José Limon Dance Foundation
The Presser Foundation
The 2008 National Humanities Medal recipients are:
Gabor Boritt, professor of Civil War

studies, Gettysburg College
Harold Holzer, historian
John Templeton Foundation
Myron Magnet, editor-at-large, City Journal
Albert Marrin, author of children’s books
Norman Rockwell Museum
Milton Rosenberg, host, Extension 720, WGN Radio, Chicago
Robert Smith, philanthropist
Thomas Saunders III and Jordan Horner Saunders, philanthropists

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President-elect Obama Announces Top Economic Advisers

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Responding to what he describes as “an economic crisis of historic proportions,” President-elect Barack Obama announced key members of his economic team, including Timothy Geithner as secretary of the treasury, his first official Cabinet nomination.

Speaking in Chicago November 24 with Vice President-elect Joe Biden, Obama said he has also asked former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers to head the National Economic Council, Christina Romer to chair the Council of Economic Advisors and Melody Barnes to serve as director of the Domestic Policy Council.

“I’ve sought leaders who could offer both sound judgment and fresh thinking, both a depth of experience and a wealth of bold new ideas — and most of all, who share my fundamental belief that we cannot have a thriving Wall Street without a thriving Main Street, that in this country, we rise and fall as one nation, as one people,” Obama said.

In turning to Geithner to oversee the financial security of the United States in a time of turmoil, Obama chose a treasury secretary who has already been closely involved with many of the key decisions in the Bush administration’s response to the crisis. As head of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Geith-

ner has been the Federal Reserve’s main liaison with Wall Street and supervised the government’s takeover of American International Group and its assistance in the acquisition of Bear Stearns by JPMorgan Chase. The Federal Reserve is the U.S. central bank.



President-elect Obama says his economic team will offer “sound judgment and fresh thinking” to respond to the financial crisis.

The Treasury secretary-designate also helped manage the U.S. response to the Asian financial crisis while serving as assistant secretary of the treasury for international affairs from 1998 to 2001.

“The economic crisis we face is no longer just an American crisis, it’s a global crisis, and we will need to reach out to countries around the world to craft a global response. Tim’s extensive international experience makes him uniquely suited to do that work,” Obama said.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Geithner has an academic background both in economics and East Asian studies. He attended high school in Thailand and also lived in present-day Zimbabwe, India and China.

If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Geithner will be in charge of managing federal finances; collecting taxes; producing coinage and currency; managing the public debt; advising on domestic and international monetary policy; and investigating and prosecuting tax evaders, counterfeiters and forgers.

During the period of the Asian financial crisis, Geithner worked closely with Lawrence Summers, who has been appointed by Obama to be his top economic adviser at the White House as head of the National Economic Council.

Summers was treasury secretary from 1999 to 2001. Before joining the Clinton administration,

he taught economics at Harvard University. He has also been a member of Obama’s transition economic advisory board. (See “President-elect Obama Planning Response to Economic Crisis (<http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/November/20081107170610esnamfuak0.5743219.html>).”)

Obama described Summers as “one of the great economic minds of our time” who has “earned a global reputation for being able to cut to the heart of the most complex and novel policy challenges.”

As head of the National Economics Council, Summers will coordinate

(Continued on page 22)

Press Reporting Cabinet Picks Without Official Confirmations

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — American statesman and legendary wit Benjamin Franklin once said, “Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead.” President-elect Barack Obama’s communications team might be in full agreement after a week of steady reporting by the news media about Cabinet selections, none of which has yet been announced officially.

Speculative headlines about the makeup of the incoming Obama administration have supplanted reflections on the historical significance of his victory in the days following the November 4 vote.

During the weeks leading up to the January 20, 2009, inauguration, President-elect Obama will announce his choices for his Cabinet and other high-level officials who will help guide his administration and play an influential role in shaping U.S. policy. (For more information, see “Dozens of Advisers Will Guide Next U.S. President (<http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/November/20081114165105hmnietua0.377392.html?CP.rss=true>).”)

The week of November 16 saw widespread news reports on several presumed Cabinet picks: Eric Holder as attorney general, Obama’s primary Democratic rival Hillary Clinton as secretary of state, former Senator Tom Daschle as secretary of health and human services, and Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano as secretary of homeland security.

But as of November 21, visitors to

the Obama-Biden Transition Team’s official Web site have yet to see any such announcements. News outlets are citing anonymous staffers or Democratic Party insiders as sources.

These rumors are at odds with the Obama campaign’s famous discipline in communication, such as its ability to keep the choice of Senator Joe Biden as running mate a secret until Obama sent his millions of Twitter subscribers a brief announcement in August.

In his first news interview after winning the election, Obama was repeatedly asked by CBS reporter Steve Kroft on November 16 about whom he might ask to serve in his administration, or at least when he might make an announcement.

“How close are you to settling on a Cabinet?” Kroft asked. The president-elect replied, “Well, I think that I’ve got a pretty good idea of what I’d like to see. But it takes some time to work those things through,” adding, twice, that announcements would be made “soon.”

Was Senator Clinton in the running for the Cabinet? Kroft persisted. “She is one of the most thoughtful public officials that we have. Beyond that, you’re not getting anything out of me, Steve,” Obama replied. Kroft eventually gave up.

Despite the silence of the president-elect and his staff, news outlets have been confidently reporting Cabinet selections. The news that Governor Napolitano was the apparent secretary of homeland security won the public endorsement of Obama’s election rival Senator John McCain, who said he had called her

to offer his congratulations and urged her “rapid confirmation” by the U.S. Senate, even though there has been no official announcement.

The Washington Post’s Chris Cillizza wrote November 19 that the tremendous number of phone calls involved in “vetting” Cabinet nominees and obtaining background checks for security clearances has widened the circle of those “in the know” about who is being considered for these important posts. That growth “virtually ensures people with less loyalty to the president-elect will be privy to critical information,” he said. And of course, the news media are always eager to tap these sources.

America.gov has remained silent on the ever-expanding list of likely officials because, as an official U.S. government information source, it cannot report on them until they are officially announced.

In the meantime, more information about each Cabinet position is available on our Transition page (<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/cabinet.html>), where updates will be posted as they are officially announced.

For more information, visit the Obama-Biden Transition Team’s official Web site (<http://www.change.gov/newsroom>).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Bush Optimistic About Overcoming Global Financial Problems

By Phillip Kurata
Staff Writer

Washington — President Bush believes that the world economy may rebound well ahead of the 18-month timetable set at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit that took place in Lima, Peru, November 22-23.

According to Dan Price, a White House official who was in Lima with Bush, the president sees actions taken by the U.S. government and other governments as likely to produce results quickly.

The communiqué of the APEC summit, representing 21 economies in Asia and North and South America, reflects the conclusions by the leaders of the Group of 20 (G20), who met in Washington November 15. The APEC group also pledged not to erect new protectionist barriers in the next 12 months and to work toward reviving the Doha round of World Trade Organization negotiations aimed at opening markets. The APEC time frame for ending the financial crisis mirrors a prediction by the International Monetary Fund that the economies in the developed world will grow by a minuscule 0.9 percent in 2009 before reviving to a more robust growth-level in 2010.

Combining the APEC commitments with those of the G20 countries, Price said, puts the world in good position to reignite growth and overcome the current crisis. "We've seen that, in this global economic crisis, we're all interconnected and inter-related," he said.

Price said that Bush wants to avoid the mistakes that were made following the 1929 stock market crash.

"He did a lot of studying and reading up over the years in regards to what happened in 1929, when we



President George W. Bush waves to the audience after delivering his address to the APEC CEO Summit 2008 in Lima, Peru.

in our country raised taxes, and then we passed the Smoot-Hawley Act, which was anti-trade. What followed was a very rough decade of the Great Depression," Price said.

TRADE AMONG APEC MEMBERS

The APEC summit in Lima was the eighth that Bush has attended. During his eight years in office, the trade relations among the economies bordering the Pacific Ocean have broadened and deepened, according to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

When Bush took office, the United States had three free trade agreements in force with partners in Latin America and Asia. That num-

ber has grown to 14, with three agreements waiting to take effect and three more — with Panama, Colombia and South Korea — completed but not approved by Congress.

Rice said that the trade agreements with APEC countries "are the most advanced," in terms of economics, labor rights and environmental protection. "They are the kind of models of free trade agreements going forward," she said.

In the secretary's view, a huge success of the U.S. engagement with the Asia-Pacific region is improved relations with China.

"The United States has better relations with China than ever, across the board, and it's not

easy to manage a very complicated relationship with a country that is emerging in the way that China is," she said.

While the Bush administration addresses differences with China in human rights and economic matters, "the president has kept at front and center the importance of the United States remaining open to the advantages of a growing Chinese economy, resisting protectionist pressures, using the strategic economic dialogue ... to press toward an opening of the Chinese economy," Rice said.

Other U.S. successes in Asia related to APEC are progress toward defusing the North Korean nuclear

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Large Economies Move to Get at Roots of Financial Crisis

By Andrzej Zwanecki
Staff Writer

Washington — A group of large economies has signaled its willingness to get ahead of the global financial crisis as it pushed for reform of the financial system.

Opinions of American analysts about the outcome of the Group of 20 summit differ, ranging from “neither a disappointment nor a triumph” to “better than expected.”

Barry Eichengreen’s view is somewhere in the middle. Eichengreen, a professor of economics and political science at the University of California, Berkeley, told America.gov that expecting the leaders of 19 industrialized and emerging-market nations plus the European Union who gathered in Washington in mid-November to “solve all the world’s economic problems in one day” would be unrealistic.

Wendy Dobson, the head of the Institute for International Business at the University of Toronto, said that, considering their minimal time for preparation, the leaders did what was needed: They launched a new process with defined priorities, an expert task force, deadlines and planned follow-up meetings. (See “Large World Economies Agree to Boost Growth, Tackle Crisis ([.6696588.html \).”\)](http://www.america.gov/st/econ-english/2008/Novem-ber/20081115190815saikceinawz0</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Some ideas on midterm regulatory reform endorsed by the meeting — such as strengthening oversight of complex financial products or enhancing regulatory cooperation — had been discussed before the summit. The summit, however, succeeded in institutionalizing a process to implement some of these ideas and broaden the reach and accelerate implementation of oth-



World leaders gather for a group photo at the G20 summit in Washington, DC on November 15. (AFP/File/Eric Feferberg)

ers.

“This is a measure of progress,” although it may take months or years before changes actually happen, Eichengreen said.

The focus of the summit’s recommendations is on the areas that have contributed to the market turmoil: complex financial products, hedge funds, over-the-counter trading, credit-rating agencies, off-balance-sheet accounting, and bank management. Whether the recommendations will lead to a financial system with fewer flaws or less

chance of crisis will depend on the implementation details, according to analysts.

But progress can be made, Eichengreen said. He said that in the aftermath of a regional financial crisis in the late 1990s, Asian nations, with help from multilateral financial bodies, identified problems and implemented some reforms. As a result, Asia has been less affected by the current turmoil than any other region.

This time, finance ministers and regulators must tackle challenges that have arisen from financial markets becoming global.

The main issue is inadequacy of national regulation of cross-border financial flows and innovation, Dobson told America.gov. She said some G20 propositions, such as the creation of a college

of bank supervisors, try to address this challenge by subjecting financial innovation to more scrutiny without stifling it. Whatever form enhanced scrutiny ultimately takes, “regulators have to work together more closely,” Dobson said.

“That hopefully will be one of the big changes coming out of the crisis,” she said.

Eichengreen said the crisis has shown that regulation at the national level indeed does not work for markets that are interconnected.

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U.S. Intelligence Chief Outlines Successes Against Terrorism

By Jacquelyn S. Porth
Staff Writer

Washington — Michael Hayden, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, spoke recently of the international community's successes against terrorism in key regions of the world and diminished worldwide support for al-Qaida.

Hayden told the Washington-based Atlantic Council of the United States November 13 that the United States — in cooperation with partners such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and the Philippines — has greatly diminished the reach of several terrorist groups.

Al-Qaida in Iraq, for example, "is on the verge of strategic defeat," with the flow of money, weapons and foreign fighters into Iraq now "greatly diminished," Hayden said.

And al-Qaida's operational arm in Saudi Arabia largely has been defeated, he said. Indonesia has made inroads in detecting and disrupting terrorist plots in the past three years as a result of what he called "aggressive action by one of our most effective counterterrorism partners." Filipino allies have kept the pressure on the Abu-Sayef group, Hayden said, limiting its effectiveness.

While the remote, tribal areas on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border remain problematic, progress has been made, according to the CIA director. He said the practice of terrorists taking refuge in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas is lessening. Due to cooperation among the Pakistan government, its military and the U.S. intelligence community, terrorist networks have lost many "decision makers, com-

manders, experienced and committed fighters" who, Hayden said, planned attacks against Europe and the United States.

The Pakistani government and military "deserves great credit for its current campaign against extremists," he added. More al-Qaida leaders have been killed or captured "in



Pakistani soldiers who have been fighting militants in the tribal area on the Afghan-Pakistan border display confiscated ammunition.

partnership with our Pakistani allies than ... with any other partner around the world," Hayden said.

The CIA official cited another reason for optimism in the fight against terrorism: "Some hard-line religious leaders are speaking out against al-Qaida's tactics and its ideology." Hayden cited generic polling showing declining support for al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden in predominantly Muslim countries.

More and more Muslims "are pushing back against the senseless violence and flawed worldview of al-Qaida," he said. Credible, authentic, influential Islamic voices are speaking out and "refuting al-Qaida's twisted justification for murdering innocents" as well as its ideology seeking to erase the distinction between combatants and noncombatants.

Besides Pakistan and Indonesia, Hayden praised the counterterrorism efforts of other U.S. partners such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Military and law enforcement activities and even efforts addressing the conflict of ideas have resulted in improvements in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, he said. "I have always said that the civilized world will win this fight when we win the war of ideas," he added.

NEXT STEPS

Efforts to defeat al-Qaida in the near future will continue to center on Yemen, Somalia and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, according to Hayden. Intelligence suggests that some veterans of terror operations in Iraq are now drifting to other regions, such as North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, in search of new action.

Even though al-Qaida has suffered serious setbacks in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, the intelligence-agency director said, "it remains a determined, adaptive enemy." Al-Qaida is still "the most dangerous threat we face," he told the Atlantic Council's Global Intelligence Forum.

In Hayden's opinion, al-Qaida's base of operations on Pakistan's border with Afghanistan remains "the single most important factor today in the group's resilience and its ability to threaten the West." He contends that the remote, tribal areas along the Afghan-Pakistan border have supported terrorist financing, recruiting, training and plotting in the past.

While al-Qaida-related operations in the tribal regions do not rise to the

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U.S. Intelligence Chief Outlines Successes Against Terrorism . . .

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level of activity that once existed in Afghanistan, Hayden said, its recent efforts to destabilize Pakistan are worrisome.

The Pakistani army has been fighting extremists "forcefully and with considerable success since early August," Hayden said. The Pakistanis have a multibrigade operation under way in the tribal area of Bajaur, and while they have sustained losses, "they are also imposing significant casualties on our common enemy."

But when al-Qaida is dealt a blow, Hayden said, its senior leadership recalibrates. "They constantly look for ways to make up for losses, extend their reach, take advantage of opportunities, and we're seeing that ... in some places like ... Somalia or Yemen."

Yemen has witnessed an unprecedented number of attacks in 2008, Hayden said, including two against the U.S. Embassy. The sophistication of attacks and the range of targets are broadening. Hayden said that, like what has happened elsewhere, terrorist cells in Yemen "are operating from remote, tribal areas where the government has traditionally had very little authority."

That al-Qaida tends to gain strength only in isolated, ungoverned territories "may be the most damning thing we can say about this organization," Hayden said. It can subsist only beyond the reach of civilization and the reach of the rule of law.

HANDLING THE TRANSITION

As head of the CIA, Hayden's ser-

vice may continue into the Obama administration, although frequently a new president appoints his own director. Asked about his interest in continuing in his present position — which includes conducting daily presidential intelligence briefings at the White House — the director said he serves at the pleasure of the president, but would consider staying if asked.

As this is the first wartime presidential transition for the United States in 40 years, some thought is being given by transition officials to keeping some Bush appointees, at least temporarily, so the transfer of power from one administration to another is as seamless as possible.

Hayden said members of the Bush administration have been directed to "make this the smoothest transition in recorded history." With the United States on a wartime footing and al-Qaida already having made a critical remark about President-elect Barack Obama on the Internet, the director said, efforts are under way to get a new team ready for any contingency as swiftly as possible "so that there is no diminution in the ability of the Republic to defend itself."

Video of the forum (http://www.acus.org/event_blog/cia-director-event) is available on the Atlantic Council Web site. A transcript of Hayden's remarks (<https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/directors-remarks-at-the-atlantic-council.html>) is available on the CIA Web site.

For more information about U.S. policy, see Confronting Terrorism (<http://fpolicy.america.gov/fpolicy/>

security/counterterrorism.html) on America.gov.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Bush Optimistic About Overcoming Global . . .

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threat and the relaxation of tensions in relations between China and Taiwan because of the vast expansion of trade and investment across the Taiwan Strait.

With regard to Latin America, Rice said Bush has helped countries in the region adopt more pragmatic policies.

"The president has broken through an age-old struggle about ideology in Latin America. This is not a question of whether countries come from the left or from the right; it's really an issue of countries that are governing wisely, democratically, that have ... economies that are open to trade and that invest in their people," Rice said. She said the United States has friendly ties with left-leaning governments, such as Brazil, Chile and Uruguay, as well as with Colombia, a right-leaning one.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Domestic Violence Seen as Worldwide Problem

By Sonya Weakley
Staff Writer

Washington — Aissata Cisse is a pediatrician in Africa, but many of her patients are adult women. While practicing in Niger and most recently in Senegal, Cisse saw women who were abused by their husbands or intimate partners. These women were trying to take care of their children, but she knew they needed help first.

Cisse realized she would have to provide several services to the women, so she organized a group of specialists that could provide various services, including legal and psychological. “I counsel women, listen to them, and I give advice. It is my job.”

She knows that in most cases, the woman is the victim of a man whose father abused his mother. “It is a cycle, and it will continue,” she said, eventually affecting the children of the mother who shows up at her door.

In 1999, The United Nations General Assembly designated November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

In remarks to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women in February 2008, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said at least one out of three women in the world is likely to be beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime.

“Violence against women is an issue that cannot wait,” he said. “No country, no culture, no woman young or old is immune to this scourge.”

Cisse, who recently came to the United States to get a master’s degree in public health, believes domestic violence stems from cultural



United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Goodwill Ambassador Nicole Kidman takes part in a symposium during the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, in the ECOSOC Chamber at U.N. headquarters, Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2008. (AP Photo/Henny Ray Abrams)

and economic factors, such as a trend toward smaller families.

A May 2008 United Nations report cites a worldwide shift from extended families to nuclear families. Cisse says she has seen this change leave abused women with no one to turn to, and with no one to hold the abuser accountable.

According to the 2006 United Nations report titled In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against

Women, such cultural barriers are common. “Male violence against women is generated by socio-cultural attitudes and cultures of violence in all parts of the world, and especially by norms about the control of female reproduction and sexuality.”

THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

Numerous government and nongovernmental organizations throughout the world are working to end domestic violence, according to the U.N. report. The United States assists countries through grants from the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of State and others.

One of the priorities is to train law enforcement agencies and courts to recognize the problem and treat it appropriately. The training also helps break down social barriers, according to judges and lawyers who have worked directly with police officers, prosecutors, judges and legislators outside the U.S.

Susan Block, a retired circuit court judge in St. Louis, has traveled to Lithuania, among other countries, to train judges and help them develop civil protection orders that would be enforceable within the system. She also has helped prosecutors come up with ways to prosecute without the victim’s testimony, as some victims are reluctant to testify against their abusers.

She gave police officers ideas for tactics, such as using “excitable utterances” as evidence even if the victim is not in court. “If the

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Domestic Violence Seen as Worldwide Problem . . .

(Continued from page 19)

woman called an emergency number or said excitable things to police, the police officer could use it.”

She found younger police officers most receptive. “They said they became police officers to help people, and they were anxious to do something about this.”

Wanda Lucibello, a special-victims prosecutor in New York, has hosted many international delegations and traveled to many countries, including Grenada, Belize, South Africa and Zimbabwe, to provide training.

Because Lucibello works with one of several family justice centers sponsored by the U.S. Justice Department around the United States, she often presents the justice center model — providing many services in one place — in other countries.

In some countries, she finds gender inequality “so powerful. It is an additional hurdle to get through.” She also finds that some of her trainees have had personal experiences with

domestic violence within their own families, or they recognize some of the characteristics in themselves.

In many cases, her international training involves helping police and

handling an arrest for a homicide, [in that] there is no victim [from whom to obtain information]. That gets them excited because they have a way of looking at it.”

Judge Ramona Gonzales of the La Crosse County, Wisconsin, Circuit Court has taught “Domestic Violence 101” in Guam and other places.

“We tell them what they need to be sensitive to and what questions to ask — has the victim been isolated from her family and friends?”

She stresses that domestic violence goes beyond the physical attack. “It is about power and control.” The fear, she said, is that the controlling behavior

won’t reach the judicial system “until you have a homicide or suicide or both.”

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦



Women hold up posters showing a rape and murder victim during a protest to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in San Salvador, Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2008. (AP Photo/Luis Romero)

prosecutors take domestic violence seriously, but often she finds more distress than resistance.

“They share the same frustrations and concerns as police officers [in the United States],” such as the victim not wanting to press charges against the abuser.

She also offers ideas for successful prosecution. “I compare it to gathering evidence as though they were

World's Best Thinkers Predict Resource Scarcity in 2025

By Jacquelyn S. Porth
Staff Writer

Washington — In 25 years, the world likely will face greater shortages of water for drinking and farming, insufficient food to meet demand and competition for energy resources.

The world, as a group of strategic thinkers imagines it, will be more multipolar. No single nation will dominate with overwhelming power; instead, multiple nations will wield great power simultaneously and businesses, tribes, nonprofits, religious groups and even criminal networks will have greater influence on the world stage.

These are some of the suppositions in a new report, "Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World," prepared by the U.S. National Intelligence Council (NIC). The 115-page study is billed as a description of factors likely to shape future events, rather than a set of predictions about the future. Its purpose is to identify the key dynamics that may shape the international system.

The report sought to tap the best strategic analysis in the United States and around the world, drawing on extensive input from hundreds of specialists in nearly two dozen countries, including people associated with Chatham House in London; the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in Sweden; and the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations in Beijing, as well as Washington-based research organizations such as the Brookings Institution and the American Enterprise Institute, and the RAND Corporation of Santa Monica, California.

NIC timed its release to fall between the November 2008 presidential election and the inauguration of the new president in January



Predicted Water Scarcity in 2025

2009. Its authors hope it will shape the thinking of the incoming Obama administration. NIC Chairman Thomas Fingar said it provides an opportunity for new Cabinet members to think about their responsibilities in a broader, global context.

Fingar told members of the Atlantic Council of the United States in Washington November 20 that the report is designed to give new leaders a heads-up. If they have a sense of how global events may unfold and what key influencers will be, the senior intelligence official said, they will be better prepared to manage and mitigate negative developments.

LEADERS ARMED WITH KNOWLEDGE CAN FIND READY SOLUTIONS

If the president-elect is pleased with a particular direction of events, he may wish to take certain actions to preserve developments along that path, the NIC chairman writes in the report. If not, he may want "to develop and implement policies to change" that trajectory, Fingar says.

In his Atlantic Council remarks, Fingar emphasized the importance of leadership and its ability to change outcomes. "If you know what the problem is," he said, "you can tackle it." Nothing that is projected in the report "is immutable"; everything is susceptible to leadership intervention.

In examining the global landscape ahead, the report's authors divide their analysis into areas of "relative certainties" and examine the "likely impact" as well as "key uncertainties" with accompanying "potential consequences." For example, the report posits that the United States will remain the single most powerful nation, but it will be less dominant. As a result, the United States likely will face challenging trade-offs between foreign policy and domestic priorities due to its shrinking economic and military capabilities.

Atlantic Council President Frederick Kempe pointed out that as the authors took drafts of the report on the road and circulated versions of

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World's Best Thinkers Predict Resource Scarcity in 2025 . . .

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it on the Internet for national and international comment, they learned that the world does not want less American influence, but seeks an America that is smarter and more skillful.

The report states that globalization will continue generating greater wealth and greater inequality at the same time. It says the shift of global wealth and economic power from West to East "is without precedent in modern history." The Global Trends project has been under way for a year, but was completed before the global financial crisis occurred.

The report says China is expected to have greater world impact in the next 20 years than any other country. If trends continue, China will have the second largest economy and be a leading military power by 2025, and it may be the largest

polluter and importer of natural resources.

India is also seen to be on a fast economic track and likely will "strive for a multipolar world in which New Delhi is one of the poles," according to the report.

Russia's future could go either way. It could become richer, more powerful and self-assured "if it invests in human capital, expands and diversifies its economy and integrates with global markets," or it could — absent these steps — go into a tail-spin, especially if oil and gas prices stay in the \$50-\$70 per barrel range.

Terrorism will remain a key concern, according to Global Trends, but its attraction to Middle Eastern youth may be lessened, particularly if unemployment there declines. Fingar said al-Qaida's appeal is waning because it opposes modernity and democracy — both of

which are desired by youth around the world.

The report tackles issues such as demography and climate change. It points to virtually all population growth in the next two decades occurring in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Climatic effects will vary by region, but such change is expected to exacerbate resource scarcities.

This quadrennial report is the NIC's fourth. Fingar said he hopes the newly published version — with sections on women as agents of geopolitical change and the impact of higher education on the global landscape — will stimulate an engaging dialogue among those who read it because the world in 2025 "will be substantially different than today." ♦

President-elect Obama Announces Top Economic Advisers . . .

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policymaking for domestic and international economic issues, coordinate economic policy advice for the president, assure that policy decisions are consistent with the president's goals and monitor policy implementation.

Christina Romer, who will serve as chairwoman of the Council of Economic Advisors, will also be providing the Obama administration with economic policy recommendations. The council prepares the annual Economic Report of the President. Romer, an economics professor at

the University of California, Berkeley, has "done groundbreaking research on many of the topics our administration will confront, from tax policy to fighting recessions," Obama said.

As director of the Domestic Policy Council, Melody Barnes will also focus on economic policy matters including education, health care, energy and Social Security, Obama said. Barnes, who was an executive vice president at the Center for American Progress before joining the Obama-Biden transition team, "will be working hand-in-hand with my economic policy team to chart a

course to economic recovery."

Unlike Treasury Secretary-designate Geithner, Summers, Romer and Barnes will not need to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate since their positions are part of the Executive Office of the President.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Dissident Writers Fight for Justice by Speaking Truth to Power

By Lauren Monsen
Staff Writer

Washington — As many dictators can attest, literary artists are among the fiercest critics of human rights abuses worldwide.

In the 1960s, the works of dissident novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008) of Russia exposed the Soviet labor-camp system. Solzhenitsyn was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1970, but his fame did not protect him from persecution, and he was forced into exile in 1974. He eventually settled in the United

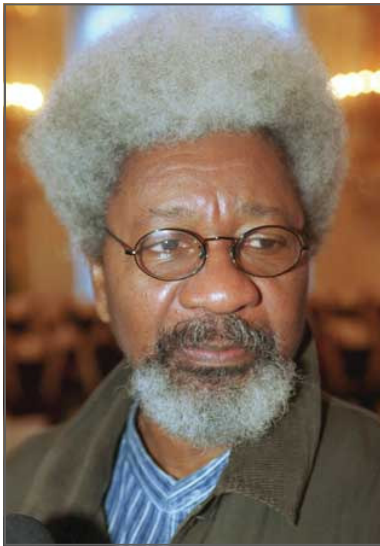
States, living as a virtual recluse before finally returning to Russia in 1994.

Solzhenitsyn's fight against authoritarian rule mirrors similar battles joined by many authors, including Czech writer/playwright/politician Vaclav Havel.

As a prominent dissenter against Soviet control of his homeland, Havel used the theater as a platform to attack totalitarian regimes. Although his political activism earned him several prison stays and near-constant harassment, Havel triumphed during the 1989 "Velvet Revolution" that propelled him into the presidency of Czechoslovakia (later the Czech Republic).

As president, Havel led his country's transition to multiparty democ-

racy, and he remains a deeply admired figure internationally. Havel's views have been compared to those of Britain's George Orwell (1903-1950), whose celebrated novels



Nigeria's Wole Soyinka, a Nobel Prize winner, condemned political oppression through his plays and other writings.

Animal Farm and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* paint a chilling picture of government repression, a theme echoed by dissident artists around the globe.

Russian poet and civil rights activist Natalya Gorbanevskaya was one of eight protesters to demonstrate in Moscow's Red Square on August 25, 1968, against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Having recently given birth, she

was not tried in court with the other demonstrators, but she wrote an account of the trial (titled *Noon*) that was published abroad as *Red Square at Noon*.

Gorbanevskaya was arrested in December 1969 and imprisoned in a Soviet psychiatric facility until February 1972. She emigrated in December 1975 and now lives in Paris.

Novelist, essayist and poet Julia Alvarez, a native of the Dominican Republic whose family fled to the

United States when she was 10, won acclaim with her 1995 novel *In the Time of the Butterflies*, inspired by the true story of three sisters who were murdered by agents of the Rafael Trujillo dictatorship that once ruled the author's homeland.

Nigeria's Wole Soyinka, a writer, poet and playwright, has been an outspoken critic of many Nigerian administrations and of political tyrannies worldwide. Much of his writing has focused on what he calls "the oppressive boot and the irrelevance of the color of the foot that wears it."

Soyinka's activism came at great personal cost. He was arrested in 1967, during the Nigerian Civil War, and placed in solitary confinement for his attempts at brokering a peace between the warring factions. Released 22 months later, after international attention was drawn to his imprisonment, he left Nigeria in voluntary exile.

Widely considered Africa's most distinguished playwright, Soyinka received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1986, the first sub-Saharan African to be so honored.

Czeslaw Milosz (1911-2004), regarded as one of Poland's greatest poets and prose writers, fought cen-

sorship by his nation's Communist government during the Cold War years of the 1950s and 1960s. His

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Writer/playwright/politician Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic helped transform his country into a multiparty democracy.

Victims, Counselors Reclaim Lives from Torture

By Jane Morse
Staff Writer

Washington — Survivors of torture and persecution who fled to the United States for asylum have had much taken away from them: their sense of dignity and personal safety, their family and friends, the security of having homes and careers.

But meeting them and the counselors who try to help them heal wounds and adjust to their new country reveals that they bring skills, generosity and an enthusiasm to give back to their new communities.

Recently, in a community room at a local church, some dozen survivors of torture and trauma gathered to share their stories. They are the clients of Advocates for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (ASTT), one of about 23 nonprofit organizations in the United States dedicated to providing mental health and social services to victims of what the United Nations has labeled “the most profound of human rights abuses.”

The attendees came from many parts of the world. In their home countries, these survivors of persecution were students, teachers, lawyers or just plain working folk. A few were human rights and political activists, but most ran afoul of their governments for simply speaking their minds.

A harvesting and irrigation technologist enraged his government by telling his students certain standard irrigation practices were not effective for every part of the country. A teacher joined a teacher’s profes-

sional organization and was accused of espousing a “hidden agenda” in opposition to the ruling regime.

“Everyone has a responsibility to their community,” said one survivor. “But everyone has his own way of thinking. A person should be free to be an individual.”

RETAINING A SPIRIT OF GIVING

There are more than 400,000 torture survivors who have found refuge in the United States. About 40,000 live in the Baltimore-Washington area, where ASTT, funded primarily by U.S. federal and state sources as well as donations from the general public, counsels more than 200 each year.

Karen Hanscom, executive director of ASTT and a licensed psychologist who helped found the nonprofit in 1994, told America.gov: “The number of [torture survivors] who go into the helping professions — that shocks me. I would think that after you’ve had so much taken away — your whole sense of who you are and your sense of worth, because that’s what torture does — how you then have an ounce of strength to give to other people is a phenomenon to me.

“But they do, though. They want to be teachers, or they want to be human rights workers here [in the United States]. They get onto nonprofit boards. A lot become nurses. So it’s amazing to me that they then want to start giving again.”

In fact, one of the oft-repeated desires the survivors voiced at their recent meeting was their eagerness to find jobs or go back to school

once their asylum petitions were approved by the U.S. government.

When torture survivors do find paying jobs, they often contribute what they can financially to those who helped them.

“The other thing that is shocking to me,” Hanscom said, “is people who have gotten asylum and they’re working three jobs and they’re trying to make a go here and all of a sudden we’ll get a money order [from them] for \$50. That’s really meaningful.”

IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA

“I am amazed by Americans,” one survivor told America.gov. “I feel comfortable I can talk to Americans. I appreciate people listening. Even strangers will listen and try to help and give encouragement.”

Many survivors told America.gov that the election campaigns of Barack Obama and John McCain were a special source of amazement to them — and not just because a person of African descent could win the presidency of the United States.

The survivors find plenty to be amazed at in the United States, but their counselors also find much to admire in their clients.

Joachim Nthawie, a native of Zambia who previously worked in that country with refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has been with ASTT since 2003 and has a doctorate in pastoral counseling from Loyola College in Maryland. ♦

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Telling America's story

Dissident Writers Fight for Justice by Speaking . . .

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1953 book *The Captive Mind*, which explains how Stalinist regimes pressured writers and scholars to conform in postwar Eastern Europe, has been described as one of the finest studies of the behavior of intellectuals under a repressive system.

Milosz, who emigrated to the United States in 1960 and became a U.S. citizen in 1970, was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1980.

The career of Russian poet Joseph Brodsky (1940-1996) followed a similar trajectory. Brodsky, an essayist as well as a poet, was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1972, essentially for refusing to subordinate his writings to the ideological needs of the Communist Party. He moved to the United States and became a citizen in 1977, winning the Nobel Prize for literature in 1987. In 1991, Brodsky became poet laureate of the United States.

One of the most impassioned voices on the literary scene belongs to Filipina author Ninotchka Rosca. Now a resident of New York, Rosca had been a political prisoner in the Philippines under the dictatorial regime of the late Ferdinand Marcos.

Rosca — whose short stories, novels and nonfiction works have won her the nickname “the First Lady of Philippines Literature” — is particularly concerned with women’s oppression and gender exploitation. She often speaks on such issues as sex tourism, trafficking, the mail-order bride industry and violence against women.

These writers, and countless others, have demonstrated that literary art can be a potent weapon against tyranny, corruption and injustice. By shining a spotlight on the world’s ills — and the regimes that perpetuate them — writers of conscience are doing their part to address urgent problems and hold authorities accountable. ♦

Large Economies Move to Get at Roots of Financial Crisis . . .

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For example, when U.S. mortgage-backed securities went bad, they ravaged the treasury of a small town in Norway, and the collapse of major banks in Iceland affected depositors in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

But because we still live in the world of sovereign states, Eichengreen said, radical attempts to reinvent the global financial architecture are not likely to be accepted. “We will have a global financial regulator at about the same time we have a global army,” he said. A new financial order will simply be a strengthened version of the old one, in his opinion.

Making the Financial Stability Forum, an international standard-setting advisory body, a brain of

the reform and expanding its membership to emerging markets puts the reform on the right path, according to many analysts. Eichengreen said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) can advance the reform of the global financial system farther along the path by fulfilling its statutory duties.

So far, the IMF has failed to play its prescribed role in the financial system because powerful member countries often have refused to abide by fund rules, experts say. Attempts made in recent years to make the organization more representative and effective have not produced much change.

Asking the IMF to be an enforcer of the existing rules and new standards set by the FSF in the future will come to the same effect unless member countries give the

fund more legitimacy and independence, observers say.

The IMF will continue to be unwilling to criticize financial practices of countries that fund it unless it is more insulated from politics, according to Eichengreen.

Immediate steps agreed to by the leaders to address a severe economic slowdown were somewhat disappointing, according to some analysts. The G20 endorsed fiscal measures to stimulate demand in general, but failed to come up with a plan for coordinated action. The group also called for adequate funding at the IMF to support emerging-market and developing economies but did not recommend a specific level. ♦